

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SCS-06 CA-01 OPR-02 PM-05
NSC-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01
USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 /059 W
-----022069 161516Z /53

R 161335Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4238
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L NAIROBI 0751

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: AMER, CASC, UG, US, KE
SUBJECT: UGANDA AMCITS WILL STAY ON

1. REVEREND GEORGE W. CARROLL, BAPTIST MISSIONARY RESIDING IN JINJA, UGANDA CALLED ON ME JANUARY 13. HE INFORMED ME THAT THE AMERICAN MISSIONARY COMMUNITY, DESPITE OUR ADVICE TO LEAVE WHICH WAS REITERATED BY AMBASSADOR FROEWIS AT HIS JANUARY 12 RECEPTION, IS SOLIDLY IN FAVOR OF STAYING ON AS A "MISSION OF HOPE."

2. CARROLL SAID THE AMERICAN MISSIONARY COMMUNITY DOES NOT FEEL PHYSICALLY THREATENED AND BELIEVES IT HAS A JOB TO DO IN THE REALM OF SOCIAL SERVICES. HE WAS NOT SANGUINE OVER PROSPECTS FOR GETTING BAN OF RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES LIFTED DESPITE APPROACH BY ANGLICAN BISHOP ON BEHALF OF BAPTISTS, SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS, AND SALVATION ARMY AND PERSONAL APPEAL IN FAVOR OF BAPTISTS BY LIVERIAN PRESIDENT TOLBERT. CARROLL COMMENTED HE DID NOT EXPECT THE SITUATION TO IMPROVE UNTIL THERE WAS A CHANGE OF REGIME.

3. CARROLL ADDED AMERICAN MISSIONARY COMMUNITY FULLY REALIZED POSSIBILITY OF BEING TAKEN HOSTAGE IF AMIN
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CHOSE TO RETALIATE AGAINST U.S. AND EXPRESSED HIS HOPE, WHICH HE SAID WAS SHARED BY MANY, THAT U.S. GOVERNMENT WOULD DO WHAT WAS "MORALLY RIGHT" DESPITE DANGERS TO MISSIONARIES.

4. RECENT CONVERSATION CONSULAR OFFICER HAD WITH ANOTHER AMERICAN MISSIONARY RESIDING IN UGANDA REINFORCED CARROLL'S

COMMENTS IN PARA 2 AND 3. BOTH SOURCES COMMENTED THAT THERE WAS GOOD COMMUNICATION AMONG A COMMUNITY AND THAT THEY WERE COUNTING ON THEIR UGANDAN FRIENDS TO FOREWARN THEM OF DANGER.

5. CARROLL FURTHER COMMENTED THAT PRESENT ECONOMIC SITUATION WAS COMPLETELY CHAOTIC WITH DISTRIBUTION HAVING COMPLETELY BROKEN DOWN AND PEOPLE LINING UP FOR HOURS TO BUY SMALL QUANTITIES OF NECESSITIES. CONTRASTED TO THIS, NEW LUXURY ITEMS CONTINUE TO POUR IN FOR THE MILITARY AND COMMON PEOPLE OFTEN EXPRESS RESENTMENT OVER THIS, AT TIMES EXTENDING RESENTMENT TO AMCITS WHO WORK FOR PAGE AIRWAYS WHO FACILITATE SHIPMENT THESE GOODS.

6. COMMENT: REVEREND CARROLL, LONG-TIME RESIDENT OF UGANDA, APPEARS TO ME GOOD BAROMETER OF FEELINGS IN AMERICAN MISSIONARY COMMUNITY IN UGANDA. BASED ON THIS CONVERSATION, I WOULD SAY OUR CHANCES ARE VIRTUALLY NIL FOR GETTING MISSIONARIES TO LEAVE SHORT OF SOME DRASTIC ACTION BY AMIN. HOWEVER, WE ARE PROCEEDING WITH CONTINGENCY PLANS FOR EVACUATION SHOULD IT BECOME NECESSARY.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 16 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978NAIROB00751
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780023-0136
Format: TEL
From: NAIROBI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780159/aaaabybq.tel
Line Count: 85
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 3f8f63e3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3768552
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: UGANDA AMCITS WILL STAY ON
TAGS: AEMR, CASC, UG, US, KE
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/3f8f63e3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014